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Staff to Gun: Fulani Herdsmen in Nigeria

Akinyetun, Tope Shola

Abstract: In a bid to fulfill the primary responsibility of providing for one's needs, man has found himself engaging in various forms of activities which includes but is not limited to cattle rearing. This paper assesses cattle rearing carried out by Fulani herdsmen as a form of economic activity or occupation and how such occupation has come to be harmful to the host communities. The paper also appraise why the Fulani herdsmen have changed their tactics from the use of staff to the use of guns and the effect it has so far had and will continue to have on the Nigerian society in the form of routinization of violence, reprisal attacks, offshoot of another deadly sect, increase in illegal arms proliferation, intensification of ethnicisation, increased kidnappings and attacks and encroachment on rights. Finally, the paper proffer solutions to these problems so as to save the Nigerian society from being plunged Nigeria into a primitive, primordial and pedestrian state of nastiness, solitary and brute.

Keywords: Fulani attacks, Fulani herdsmen, Reprisal attacks, Pastoral nomadism, Cattle rearers

Introduction

The desire to fulfill economic responsibility has never been and will never be alien to man. There is always a requisite to fulfill one need or the other. In short, man exists to fulfill this dire necessity and his inability to do so may result in his ultimate untimely demise. Record however shows that this requisite knows no bound. In other words, in a bid to satisfy this economic obligation, man has found himself a traveller, an expeditionist, a voyager and even a wanderer. Travelling or wandering in search of 'new worlds' and 'green land' is not new to man and has transcended centuries. As a matter of fact, this has helped in world civilization since these travels and expeditions has birthed 'exportation' of culture, language, and societal development. Even in recent times this has not stopped but has only taken new forms and nomenclatures. The fact thus remains that economic activity for survival is germane to man's survival. It is pressing to borrow the words of Ake (1981) when he says:

"just as economic need is the primary need, so economic activity is man's primary activity.

The primary work, that is economic productivity, is the corollary of the primacy of economic need.

Man is first and foremost a worker or a producer.

It is by man's productive activity that he is able to obtain the economic means which he needs to sustain life.

In short, man must eat to live but he must work in order to eat. Thus productive activity is the condition for all other activities. Pp1

It is therefore by no means an exaggeration when one avers that the whole of man's survival is dependent on his economic activities. For the record, the continued existence of man is simply a function of his recognition for the need for economic undertakings.

Worthy of note is that this sort of activity is geared upon mobility which to a large extent fosters interaction with various groups, settlements, clans, villages and even cultures. Some people have come to be associated with constant mobility as a means of furthering their economic productivity. They feel the need to always move from one habitation to another. They don't even have a place they call their own anymore; a permanent place of dwelling or abode, other than where they hail from. Some cannot be associated with known families. Their home and family is what they do; trade, exchange, and even rearing of animals (pastoralism) for the aforementioned purposes. They have been called different names; movers, fugitive, wanderers, herdsmen, nomads, vagrants. Though, this is not say that their drifting is embedded with fun; it is simply a matter of necessity. They have, in the course of their constant migration, been rejected, fought, dominated, suppressed, even acculturated, leading to loss of language and culture cum identity.

One element of the history is to trace their roots to the Adamic dispensation when who having left the 'Garden of Eden' took to farming to fulfil the first rule of existence- sustenance, after which his son Cain was punished (to wander over the earth, scavenging and never reaping) for failure of being his brother's keep (Gen. 4:9-12). Another element is that contained in Hosea 9:17 where the Israelites were cast out as wanderers for disobeying their God. Decipherable of the elements and others not assessed is the fact that nomadism has been in existence for ages. It is not an African concoction.

Pastoral nomadism in Africa like in all other continents rove different terrains to find pasture for their animals since their primary occupation revolves around domesticated livestock. They hardly occupy a particular territory for a long time before migrating; hunting and gathering, engaging in agricultural exercises, and trading part of their

herds for other goods they need. They are majorly found among the Fulanis (otherwise known as Fulbe or Peuls) in Western part of Africa (Senegambia) to Chad in the east (some groups reaching as far as the Nile river in the countries of Sudan and Ethiopia); largest concentrations in Nigeria, Senegal, and Guinea (<http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Germany-to-Jamaica/Fulani.html>).

Change of Tactics: Staff to Gun

Away from the origin and lifestyle of the Fulani. The once peaceful and nomad-minded Fulani seemed to have changed tactics and approach in going about their business (for I fail to grasp where shooting and kidnapping factors into pastoralism). The present experience in Nigeria attests to a change in philosophy of the group. It leaves much to desire concerning the Fulani's continued co-

existence with and nomadic orientation among other entities in the country. The Fulani in the course of carrying out their pastoral nomadic activities have been seen to have changed tactics from mere land grazing to barrel-induced-land grazing. In short the spate of killing and kidnappings as perpetuated by the Fulani nomads calls for great concern before this foetus is given birth to and culminates into another sect or plunges the country into a primitive, primordial and pedestrian state of nastiness, solitary and brute. I am surefire that the victims of Niger-Delta struggle and Boko Haram menace can relate better to my stance on this. What these groups have in common is that they start without posing serious concerns until they become a national problem.

To further drive the point, the following is a timeline (from most recent) of the attacks orchestrated by the group as at this time:

Date	Location	Attack	Body count
April, 2016	Enugu	Heavily armed Fulani herdsmen attacked Nimbo (Nimbo Ngwoko, Ugwuigoro, Ekwuru, Ebor, Enugu Nimbo, Umuome and Ugwuachara) villages in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. Ten residential houses and a church were also burnt in addition to vehicles, motorcycles and domestic animals	40
April, 2016	Taraba	An attack on residents and razing of houses in Dori and Mesuma villages, Gashaka Local Government	15
February, 2016	Agatu	A village in Agatu, Benue State.	50
December, 2015	Jos	An attack on Kwata community, Jos South Local Government, following a prior warning leading to deaths and six houses burnt	22

Source: *Nigerianeye* (2016)

The above does not cover it all. As a matter of fact, there has been kidnappings before these 'clashes'. The kidnapping of the erstwhile Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Chief Olu Falae at his Ilado farm in Ondo State comes readily to mind. With kidnappings and gun-attacks, one might begin to wonder, what next? No one surely wants to wait around to see what they do next if not to uproot the contaminated seed before it germinates.

It is in lieu of this that this essay seeks to assess what turned the easy going pastoral nomad to a gun-carrying fugitive who no longer has respect for human life and is willing to suck life out of whatever stands (genuinely or not) in his way of feeding his cattle, what effect such abnormality has for the Nigerian populace and more importantly how this badly formed foetus can be delivered without turning to a degenerate.

Why the Killing?

In an interview with Punchng, the leader of a delegation of The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigerian (MACBAN) to the defense headquarters, Senator Dagiri Alkali claimed that the attacks carried out by the Fulani herdsmen is more of a necessity arising from the effects of the

Boko Haram attacks in the North. He claimed that the Boko Haram insurgents attacked the Fulani in the North-East and other parts of the country and stole millions of cows from the breeders. He added that the Fulani were also victims of the activities of cattle rustlers in Katsina, Zamfara, Kebbi, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau, Benue and parts of Kogi states with millions of cows taken away from them.

In his words "when the reserves and forest were gazetted and reserved for cattle breeders, this incident was not there; but the increase in population has now wiped out the entire grazing reserves in this country; 400 and something of them all wiped out. And you have a population of about 20 million cows. Where do you keep them? And every one of us likes to eat meat"- Punchng. According to him, the herdsmen were simply acting in self-defense. He was quoted saying "But you, as the military people, you know self-defense is an art. In the military, if you are attacked you have to defend yourself. You have been squeezed; you have to find a way to survive."

Alkali may have spoken well- at least from his point of view. The only worry is that his logic raises more questions than it answers any. Who is exactly should be talking about self-defense? The owners of the farmlands with his investment on it

or the man who invaded it? So the innocent women and children, lone residents, church owners, and landlords deserve to be killed in the name of self-defense? Begs the question, what exactly is 'he' defending and from 'whom'? Since self-defense seems so promising, why wasn't the approach adopted in curtailing the Boko Haram sect that drove them away from their 'gazetted reserve'? The herdsmen shouldn't have bothered themselves so much in travelling that far with their 'arms' when they could have easily faced the culprits in their regions. How did the herdsmen even come about these arms and were they anticipating 'challenge' from the land owners to warrant 'self-defense'? It is totally out of place to find herdsmen carrying guns since their occupation as it were, has nothing to do with warfare. Would it be bogus to imply that this is another strategy by Boko Haram to carry out their attacks having been 'technically' defeated? Well, it is better to leave the last part as a mere speculation so as not to render this essay misleading.

The domination of other groups, with or without force is a major feature of the Fulani. This is better grasped when one remembers Jihad launched in 1804 and recently, Sharia. As submitted by Nmezi (2005) "... in the case of Nigeria, the post-civil war situation has been the gradual and incremental maneuvering of the Hausa-Fulani group, of the political process, to favor their dominance over other groups. This is plainly a politico-cultural hegemony. Their excruciating strangulation of the country's economy by their corrupt practices, coupled with their sanctimonious pretentiousness (their desire to impose Sharia law on all of us, as well as Nigeria's membership to the Conference of Islamic Nations) are clear indications of this groups plan to hegemonize the entire nation state". Nmezi went further to postulate that "there are indicators everywhere that point to their propensity to dominate the other ethnic groups. One clear example of this, is the large number of Hausa-Fulani officers in the Nigerian military who have, since the end of the civil war, dominated the power structure in the country... another evidence of their covert or overt intention to dominate the other ethnic groups and cultures is their attempt to impose the Sharia as an official legal system in Nigeria. This means that all Nigerians would be subject to Islamic law! Those who know what that means, understand that Sharia law, a religious law for that matter, is considered by its proponents as superior to all other laws, and that simple pick-pocketing can cause a person to lose their hand, and that infidelity can cause both parties to lose their heads" [paraphrased]. The thirst for hegemony has once again reared its ugly head in the history of the Fulani as it drives them to take over farmlands outside their geopolitical zone. Of great concern here is what this hegemonical-syndrome will drive the Fulani next just to dominate and exact servitude on other groups in the country.

Having one's kinfolds as the head of country should definitely warrant the 'right' to intimidate others. Intimidation by the Fulani has its root in the early days of colonial Nigeria. Ahmadu Bello (cited by Akinola, 2016) in the Parrot Newspaper of 12th October, 1960 was quoted saying:

"The new nation called Nigeria should be an Estate of our great grandfather Uthman Dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We use the Minorities in the North as willing tools and the south as a conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us and never allow them to have control over their future"

This message of warning was intended to not only intimidate the Minorities and the South mentioned but to also acquaint them of the fate that beholds them from the 'big-brother'. Perhaps, the recent attacks is a wakeup call to resuscitate the 'task'. Back to the issue of kinfolds, one would have expected Kenyans in USA to exercising bragging rights over Americans since their 'brother' Obama became President of the free world. Can someone please remind my brothers- the herdsmen that their 'brother' reiterated that "he belongs to nobody and belongs to everybody." Besides, what happens when another President from another geopolitical zone takes over and his kinsmen also decide to exercise their self-acclaimed seniority over other groups in the country? We can as well turn the country to a battle field now!

Education they say is a great eye opener. Education is luminary in all as it gives light. Light to differentiate to right from wrong. Light to live beyond darkness casted by lack of exposure, inexperience, backwardness, and naivety. Though it seems the Fulani on the average have out rightly rejected this light. Zirra's (2014) findings corroborate this assertion when he interviewed one Adamu- a herdsman of their interest in learning and he responded "kiwo tafi mana boko ama bamu ki ba." meaning, "cattle rearing is better than education but we still do not refuse education." Zirra submitted that "the Fulanis believe rearing cattle is a culture passed down from one generation to another... cattle is their wealth, the kind of wealth an educated man cannot possess. Thus, education is of less value to them because their wealth can equally take them to higher places". Zirra further quoted Adamu as saying that:

"the Fulanis believe education will expose them to a "wild life" because they have seen some educated Fulanis forget their way of life and origin as a result of acquiring formal education. Fulani girls are often limited to Islamic schools where they learn mostly about religion and the Qur'an after which they are given out for marriage as early as 13 years of age... their culture protect girls from western education because when a Fulani girl becomes educated, she wants more education and in the process refuses to marry any of the herdsmen or settle in the village. Fulani

herdsmen believe there is nothing to gain from education as they already have the wealth (cattles) they desire" [paraphrased].

With the absence of the 'light', how would a group see the massacre of another over 'animal satisfaction' as not despicable and demeaning?

Population increase has also been blame for the reason why the herdsmen have intensified their wandering into lands where their presence haven't been too sensed. Following this logic, population explosion have made people build more houses and claimed more lands which were hitherto used by herdsmen in feeding their cattle. Similar to this is the fact that there have been increases in cattle to be catered for by the herdsmen which means they available land is no more enough to feed the cattle, hence the need to go in search of lands or put scarce resources to feed their cattle.

Effect

Routinization of Violence – What we do regularly tends to form a major chunk of our habit. When conflict, due to improper handling, degenerates into violent-conflict, they are thus gradually being internalized, patterned and conventionalized. Nothing about it seems wrong anymore. It invariably becomes a norm and a convention. With the way the herdsmen are launching attacks on residents of various communities, in no time, the killing will develop into a custom. If any lesson is learnt from the Boko Haram insurgency, it is that the attacks when not checkmated soon become a way of life. In an article published by the Information Clearing House, Herman (n.d.) wrote:

"Doing terrible things in an organized and systematic way rests on "normalization." This is the process whereby ugly, degrading, murderous, and unspeakable acts become routine and are accepted as "the way things are done." There is usually a division of labour in doing and rationalizing the unthinkable, with the direct brutalizing and killing done by one set of individuals; others keeping the machinery of death (sanitation, food supply) in order; still others producing the implements of killing, or working on improving technology (a better crematory gas, a longer burning and more adhesive napalm, bomb fragments that penetrate flesh in hard-to-trace patterns).

Reprisal attacks – The casualty landowners, women, children and other residents of the communities gruesomely killed [in the name of self-defense] while defending their abode- what a paradox, feeling marginalized, intimidated and cheated may decide to 'fight back' thus birthing counter or reprisal attacks. This alone has the singular potential of disrupting the society and creating anarchy and chaos. In an interview with embittered Christians following the attack on ECWA Church in Zaria, June 2012, Kumar for Reuters quoted Bishop Dogo as saying:

"It's high time for our people to revenge because most of the attack is purposely targeted on us, so I see no reason for us not to retaliate," Zakka was also quoted saying "Retaliation is the only solution for now because the government fails to address the insurgency caused by the terrorists."

The above statements is representative of, and lends credence to the fact that reprisal attacks will begin to be coordinated and targeted at the Fulani herdsmen and that is not healthy for the Nigerian society- not even when Biafra is looking for an opportunity to agitate.

Offshoot of another deadly sect – Many terrorist groups around the world often start small and as ideological groups. I am certain we can easily relate to that in our own history. The rise of the Boko Haram from 'just' a group, to a 'terrorist network' is enough is deter one from allowing this barbaric acts to fester or become uneasily curtail able. It is better to attend to this cloudy weather before the rain starts. Afterall, the Boko Haram insurgent was not known for violence until 2009, even though there had been warnings and speculation of the increasing military character of the organization. Cook (2011) submitted that:

"After the killing of M. Yusuf, the group carried out its first terrorist attack in Borno in January 2010. It resulted in the killing of four people. Since then, the violence has only escalated in terms of both frequency and intensity"

Hence, to avoid a repetition of what was experienced under the fangs of Boko Haram- which is still very fresh in our memories, this is a clarion call and should not be given any attention less of such. The Niger Delta agitation, Boko Haram insurgency, Herdsmen clashes and recently Niger Delta Avengers' killings and disruption all reveal the fragility of the Nigerian state and how easy for militia and ethnic groups to take militancy in gaining the attention of the Federal Government which will further give impetus to other groups to spring up, after all, the previous ones have not been judiciously dealt with.

Increase in illegal arms distribution – The availability of illegally obtained arms fuels violent clashes and crisis. To continue to let the dastardly act linger on will proportionately lead to increase in and demand for illegal arms needed as a tool of 'war'. Iloani and Sunday (2016) buttressed that "A 2015 resolution of the United Nations Security Council noted concern that "illicit transfer, destabilising accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in many regions of the world continue to pose threats to international peace and security, cause significant loss of life, and contribute to instability and insecurity". They went further to opine that there are no up-to-date and accurate data on the quantity of illicit firearms in circulation in Nigeria as the nation's apex statistical body, the National Bureau of Statistics

(NBS), has no record of small arms and light weapons being used legally or illicitly. The Small Arms Survey reported that as at 2007, the number of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria were estimated at between 1 and 3 million. The estimation points to the obvious dearth of reliable data on the problem considering that the Boko Haram insurgency that broke out in full force in 2009 may have increased the quantity of illegal firearms in circulation.

In trying to explain how the illegal firepower is obtained, Iloani and Sunday (2016) reported that another dimension to the problem is local manufacture, as a large number of illicit guns are produced in Nigeria by gunsmiths and sold to persons without license. Recently, the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons, (PRESCOM) revealed that about 60 per cent of the illegal arms in the South-East zone are produced locally. If not urgently addressed, these illegally weapons will continue to exchange hands and will eventually be in the hands of our children. Let us mind the future of our children now!

Intensification of ethnicisation – One of the myriad reasons given for Nigeria's underdevelopment and backwardness in the comity of Nations is the plurality of the country. Nigeria as a colonial creation was born out of a forced marriage (no doubt about that). There has been challenges of regionalism, minority, quest for domination, federalism, succession, nation building, governance, democratization, ethnopolitics, and ethnicity due to the Nigeria's ethnic-pluralist-state. It is therefore unhealthy for such a 'fragile' state to have one group threatening the others. This will further divide the country along ethnic and regional lines as experienced since the end of colonialism. A lot has been written by Ethnicity in Nigeria. We need not divert the focus of this essay. However, worthy of note is that ethnicity plays a major and deciding role in Nigerian politics and must be handled with tact. In attesting to this, Osaghae (2006) says:

"ethnicity has been a crucial factor in state construction and failure, and the emergence of ethnic nationalism as one of the arrowheads (or fallouts) of recent and on-going transitions in many countries implies that there is no running away from the problem. Indeed, there are already a number of state reconstruction projects, notably in Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa, that privilege ethnicity".pp15

Increased kidnappings and attacks – The impetus and drive to intensify attacks and even advance in its execution will only be given to the herdsmen if they are not stopped in earnest. Having kidnapped the erstwhile SGF, Chief Olu Falae and murdered a host of others without being stopped, the group will only find drive and motivation to propagate more, especially when satisfaction is derived. To detest the reoccurrence of more

kidnappings and attacks is to abruptly snap off this branch wanting to grow into a tree.

Encroachment on rights – The Nigerian 1999 constitution (as amended) 33(1), was unequivocally explicit on the value of individual life when it states: *"Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria."* 34 (1): *"Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly (a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment; (b) no person shall be held in slavery or servitude; and (c) no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour."* and 37(1): *"The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is hereby guaranteed and protected."*

The above passages from the laws of the land protects every man's right to life, respect for his dignity and privacy of his home. The attacks as carried out by the Fulani herdsmen is a clear departure from the stipulations of the constitution and is an aberration at best!

Solutions

Reorientation – Whether one's kinsman or not, killing is not condonable or pardonable; it will only sow seeds of discord which upon germination is capable of plunging the country into deeper crisis. This is the message that should be preached to our brothers. Murder either for self-defense or otherwise is not excusable and is not the best approach in 'defense'; at least not in a modern society such as ours. To continually see other groups in the country as 'infidels', inferior and serfs to be conquered [this orientation needs to change] will continue to put the Fulani in state of acting external to the collective interest of the society. The Fulani herdsmen should be extensively oriented and coached on this discourse so as to find other civil approaches in attending to the challenges faced in their professed occupation.

Disarmament – As reiterated earlier, there exists the flow of illegally obtained firepower in the Nigerian terrain. There is therefore the urgency to 'disarm' or 'de-weaponise' this group. The laws on arms control should not only be reviewed, but should be strictly implemented in such a way that unauthorized personnel do not have access to arms. Getting to do this also means that the porous border-nature of the Nigerian society should be looked into to debar movement of arms in and out of the country illegally. The security of these borders should be manned by effective and efficient officers, equipped with surveillance system and drones to detect entry of arms and other illegal possessions detrimental to the development of the Nigerian state. At the same time, security personnel should demand that the arms already in

circulation should be surrendered within a stipulated time or face the consequences.

Institutionalization of occupation – Since the bulk of the herdsmen are uneducated and education is a life transformer, it then behooves the association of the herdsmen with the help of the government and other well-meaning private organizations to create an informal institution where the herdsmen will be trained to obtain skills pertinent to the occupation to be in tandem with what is obtainable in advanced societies. In other words, the occupation should not just be treated with levity but should be institutionalized to avoid further threat to security of lives and properties.

Government intervention – There is serious concern that the government of the day as headed by President Muhammadu Buhari has kept mute about the issue. The government needs to, by matter of exigency and promptness, address the populace of its discontent for the herdsmen attacks so as to allay fear exhibited by the affecting communities, the neighbouring communities, and in short the society at large. Accountability is an ideal principle embedded in democracy. Democracy allows for the governing class to be accountable to the governed- upon whose spinal the governing class rode into power. Political communication is an indispensable tool in keeping the political system from being stressed since it is the vehicle for input into, and output out of the political system.

Government at all levels should be involved with them by having a *tete-a-tete* with their association; first of all to mediate on the impending clashes and to agree on a *modus operandi* in such a way that the interests of the herdsmen, farmers and other residents will be protected because government cannot afford to kill the business drive [the only viable agriculture venture in the country presently]. It is important that trust is restored between the victims of the previous attacks and the perpetrators who are now aware of the possibility of a reprisal. Government cannot continue to ignore the implications of the clashes or continue to blame the herdsmen, after all, they are Nigerians too and the government is responsible to them as well. Even though some have argued that they are not Nigerians simply because Fulanis can be found outside Nigeria i.e. Ghana. But until this assumption is proven beyond reasonable doubt or any of the attacks is denied by the Fulani herdsmen, the government still owes it to them to guarantee that they carry out their business in a safe environment.

Government should also invest in irrigation in states where cattle rearing is dominant and can also create game reserves. Though some writers have argued that cattle rearing is a private business and does not require government's contribution or subvention, but they fail to realize that when such confrontations escalate, government will not have any state left to control or call its own, there will be

no more people upon whose authority the government stands anymore. Thus, by creating a conducive business environment, government is also guaranteeing its authority.

State police – Nigeria apart from being a multiethnic state also has an expanse landmass with a total of 811 governments at different levels- Federal, State and Local Governments, inhabited by over 170 million people. It is however surprising that the internal security of this great country by the police is centralized. Many have argued against the 're-creation' of state policing, stating political maneuvering, corruption, funding and abuse as major reasons. Yet, the said state executives still find funds for bogus, unrealistic and elephant projects. Not to lose focus of this paper, it is worthy of mentioning that new realities dictates that the issue of state policing is not a forgone issue as made to believe. With state policing, activities of the herdsmen can be brought under 'microscopic' check and can easily be clipped when excessive.

Civil/Human rights mobilization – Civil and Human rights movement alongside other concerned NGOs should hence take it upon themselves to mobilize against the incessant attacks. Political socialization and interest articulation remains potent instrument of sensitizing the populace against unfavourable phenomenon. Outright condemnation coupled with public outcry should be sponsored by these groups to clasp the wings of the herdsmen before it grows stronger. After all Save Nigeria Group (SNG) did a wonderful job in protesting against fuel subsidy removal in 2012.

Animal Control laws – Though this may sound external to the Nigerian space, but there is now the need for the government to formulate policies and laws that frown at free roaming of animals for the general safety of Nigerians. Aside from the cattle reared by the herdsmen destroying farmers' crops on different farmlands, they are also dangerous not only for children who may be strolling at that time, it is equally precarious for adults. The Federal Government of Nigeria must learn to look inwards to instead of trying to be reactive to issues, be proactive.

Ranching system of cattle rearing- The revered Nomadic style of cattle rearing is almost extinct in this century. More appealing ways such as ranching should be adopted. This affords herdsmen to concentrate their cattle within a given landscape with needed structures and feed to raise grazing animals. Government can in partnership with private organizations launch ranches for the herdsmen till they are able to adapt to the system and continue it. In addition to this, government can claim the deserts for the herdsmen to situate ranches there. They are travelling around for accessibility to market since they cannot consume the cows themselves, they need market to sell them. More so, since they are in search of feed for their cattle, what they are seeking for should be

provided for them in their terrain to save them the stress of wandering. All they have to do is tend to their cattle on the ranch and have them processed for market sales. This will even make the process organized and create employment in the process since people will be needed to work on the ranch, people will be needed to process the cattle for sales, and people will be needed to transport them to the target market.

However, creating ranches is not as important as filling them with attractive grasses. The ranches should be adequately funded to permanently address the problem. Government should create a 'model' ranch for private investors to follow. With time, private investors can begin to invest in ranch building across the country which will in turn have economic implications; job creation, investment opportunities, tax revenue etc.

Grazing reserves – Synonymous to the above is the fact that grazing reserves can be created across the state of the Federation for the raising of cattle and other animals as may seem fit by the herdsmen without having to trample on or infringe anyone's

right or freedom. At least with this, there wouldn't arrive the need for 'self-defense'.

Conclusion

Travelling in search for a greener pasture and favourable place of abode for survival and sustenance of one's preferred occupation is not new to Nigeria or the Fulani herdsmen in particular. However, it is important that in our dyed-in-the-wool and die-hard actions to bring this into fruition, we should refrain from encroaching upon the freedom of others. It is equally important that we desist from sowing discord in the country- however tempting it may be. Seeds when sown tend to germinate in due time. It is however 'life-threatening' and perilous for such seeds to be sown in the country at this time when questions of ethnicity, 'true-federalism, secession, good governance and democratization remain unanswered. It is therefore imperious that the Fulani attacks be dissuaded and ultimately halted before this new gun culture of nomadism presently a foetus develops into a full grown child!

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